

# Group Registration of Short Online Literary Works

This circular is an introduction to the U.S. Copyright Office's group registration option for short online literary works, known as "GRTX."

It covers

- Eligibility
- Completing an application
- Preparing a deposit and title list for upload<sup>1</sup>

While the general rule for registration is to submit one application, filing fee, and deposit for each work you want to register, the U.S. Copyright Office has established a group registration option for registering up to 50 short online literary works, known as "GRTX." A short online literary work contains between 50 and 17,500 words, and is first published as part of a website or online platform, including online newspapers, social media websites, and social networking platforms.

Examples of short online literary works include poems, short stories, articles, essays, columns, blog entries, and social media posts.

**NOTE:** The following types of literary works cannot be registered with this application, even if they contain 50 to 17,500 words and even if they were first published online:

- Emails
- Podcasts
- Audiobooks
- Computer programs

## Group Registration Eligibility

You may register up to 50 short online literary works with one application and filing fee if the following conditions are met:

- Each work contains at least 50 but no more than 17,500 words.
- The works are first published online within a three-calendar-month period.
- The applicant must provide the earliest publication date and most recent publication date for the works in the group.

- Each work is written by the same individual author or co-written by the same joint authors.  
**NOTE: works made for hire are not eligible for this group registration option.**
- Each author is named as the claimant for all the works, and the claim is limited to the “text” that appears in each work.
- The applicant includes a title for each work.
- The applicant includes a title for the group as a whole.

The group registration option is only available when all requirements set forth by Office regulations are met. Otherwise, the Office may refuse the group application and you will need to reapply with the appropriate applications, filing fees, and deposits.

### **Examination and Scope of a Group Registration**

After the Office receives your application, filing fee, and deposit, it will examine each work in the group to determine if it is copyrightable and to confirm that the legal and formal requirements for registration have been met. If the Office determines that any of these requirements have not been satisfied, it may refuse to register the entire claim.

A registration for a group of short online literary works covers the copyrightable text in each work that is submitted, and each literary work is registered as a separate work. If any of the works are uncopyrightable, the Office will refuse registration for those works and issue a registration for only the copyrightable works in the group.

### **Completing the Application for Group Registration of Short Online Literary Works**

To register a claim using this group option, you must (1) complete the Copyright Office’s online application for “Short Online Literary Works,” (2) submit a nonrefundable filing fee, (3) upload one ZIP folder containing an individual electronic copy of each work, and (4) upload a title list, which is discussed in more detail below. This circular highlights issues common to registration of a group of short online literary works. For general registration information or information on registering one work, see *Copyright Registration (Circular 2)*.

**NOTE:** Copyright Office fees are subject to change. For current fees, see *Copyright Office Fees (Circular 4)*, available on the Office’s website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov) or call the Office at (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free).

**NOTE:** Do not use the “Standard Application” or a paper application to complete a group registration. Your registration will be refused.

Mistakes in applications may lead to registration delays or registration refusals, so it is important to complete the application accurately. The Office offers the following resources for applicants who use this group registration option:

- **Frequently asked questions (FAQ).**
- Help text within the application.
- Video tutorial.

The following tips can also help clarify common points of confusion.

#### Title and Publication Information

- **Title of the group.** You must provide a title for the whole group of works. For example, you may provide a group title that identifies the author of the works and the month and year the works were first published online or you may provide a title that identifies the subject matter of the works.
- **Number of works in the group.** You must specify the total number of works being registered with your application. The maximum number of works in the group is 50.
- **Year of completion.** You must provide the year of completion. If the works were created over a period of two or more years, provide the year of completion for the most recent work in the group you wish to register.
- **Publication dates.** You must identify the earliest, as well as the most recent, date that the works were first published online. You also must identify the nation where the works were first published. If you are not sure where the works were published, you may select “Not Known” from the drop down list.
- **Filename.** As mentioned below, you must upload a list containing the title, filename, publication date, and word count for each work. The filename for this list must be entered in the field marked “Filename for List.”
- **Title of each work.** You must enter the title of each work in the application itself and the title list. The title must also match the corresponding filename of each work. Be sure to check these titles when preparing the application and deposit materials. The titles will be included in the certificate of registration and online public record. To provide title information in the application:
  - » Click “New.”
  - » Copy the titles from your title list and paste them in the “Titles of Works Being Registered” space. Be sure to include a comma after each title; if you use the Office’s **fillable form**, these commas will be added automatically. Alternatively, you may enter the title for each work individually, separated by commas.
  - » Click save.

### Deposit Requirements

To complete a group registration of short online literary works, each work must be contained in a separate digital file in the same acceptable file format. The list of acceptable formats is posted on the Office’s website at [www.copyright.gov/eco/help-file-types.html](http://www.copyright.gov/eco/help-file-types.html). Each digital file must have a filename that exactly matches a title listed on the application. Then, these works should be compressed into one ZIP folder not exceeding 500 MB and uploaded through the online registration system. Do not submit all works in one PDF file.

**Do not** mail a physical copy of your works to the Copyright Office. The Office will refuse your application and cannot return the physical copy.

Each file must contain the complete text of each work as it was first published online, but submitting a screenshot of the website or online platform is not required. You may submit the text only, disassociated from the context and formatting of the website or online platform where it was first published, as long as the text itself is identical to the text that was first published online.

## **Completing a Title List**

As mentioned earlier, you must prepare and submit a list specifying the title and filename for each work in the group. The title and filename for a particular work must be the same. The list also must include the publication date and word count for each work.

The Copyright Office strongly encourages you to prepare this list before you begin the application. Doing so will make it easier to complete the “Titles of the Works” section of the application. The Office has developed a **fillable form** that you may use to create your title list. Guidance for completing this form is provided in the video tutorials and help text mentioned above.

The title list should be submitted in Excel (.xls, .xlsx) or Portable Document Format (PDF). The filename for the list must contain the title you plan to use to identify the entire group of literary works and the case number assigned to the application by the electronic registration system. Example filename: [Name of Group] 1-111111111.xls

As mentioned above, the filename for the title list must be entered in the application itself in the space provided on the “Group Title/Publication and Completion Information” screen. The Office will use this information to locate and identify your list.

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### **NOTE**

1. This circular is intended as an overview of group registration of short online literary works. The authoritative source for U.S. copyright law is the Copyright Act, codified in Title 17 of the *United States Code*. Copyright Office regulations are codified in Title 37 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Copyright Office practices and procedures are summarized in the third edition of the *Compendium of U.S. Copyright Office Practices*, cited as the *Compendium*. The copyright law, regulations, and the *Compendium* are available on the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

## **For Further Information**

### ***By Internet***

The copyright law, the *Compendium*, electronic registration, application forms, regulations, and related materials are available on the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

### ***By Email***

To send an email inquiry, click the *Contact Us* link on the Copyright Office website.

### ***By Telephone***

For general information, call the Copyright Public Information Office at (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free). Staff members are on duty from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, eastern time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. To request application forms or circulars by postal mail, call (202) 707-9100 or 1-877-476-0778 and leave a recorded message.

### ***By Regular Mail***

Write to

Library of Congress  
U.S. Copyright Office  
Publications Section  
101 Independence Avenue, SE #6304  
Washington, DC 20559-6304

